

**Ambassador William P. McCormick.**

**Address at Pataka Museum rededication of Maori Pou.  
Commemorating WW11 United States Marines.**

**Friday 17 March 2006 3pm.**

Kia Ora Tatou:

I am honored and grateful that, so early in my term as Ambassador of the United States of America to New Zealand I am called on to play a part in such a great occasion as this.

The presence of our honored Marine veteran Jimmy Dukes, (and his family) brings history right up to the present.

Jimmy, you represent thousands of U.S. Marines who were stationed around Porirua, the Kapiti Coast, Auckland, Wellington, Warkworth and all over. Thank you for doing us the honor of this return visit.

When our Marines came here they were young; they wore smart uniforms; they had chocolates and cigarettes and laughter. They numbered in their thousands. In the darkest times of the early 1940's when New Zealand and Australia looked horribly vulnerable and unprotected, their arrival provided New Zealand with a sense of hope and New Zealand provided our boys with a sense of home.

Porirua was just a hamlet then. Now it has grown to be a thriving city that proudly celebrates the diversity of its multi-cultural communities. Pataka Museum plays a central role in this celebration. It has a fine reputation for presenting the culture and stories of Maori and Pakeha from Porirua and the region.

I sincerely thank its Director, Darcy Nicholas, Mayor, Jenny Brash, the Porirua City Council, Conservator Jack Fry, and Roger Beecham of the Porirua Historical Association for your efforts that have preserved this memorial.

It is perhaps ironic that the carver is not known to us, he too has passed into history. However his gesture of hard work, good will and remembrance has not disappeared.

Ironically, after standing alone and isolated on the Judgeford camp site for over forty years, its time has come. Here at Pataka it will now be viewed by thousands.

Generations of New Zealanders, American visitors and others from overseas will see it and 'get the message'. Which is not only that, "the Marines were here" but that – "the peaceful time we live in has been *given to us* by a generation of New Zealand, American and allied servicemen and women." For their service and sacrifice we are eternally grateful.

Thank you for your witness to the rededication of this memorial and thank you most sincerely for your care of its message.